1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

child's paternal grandmother who threw them into the sea as she pronounced a charm (*ivi-atua*): "Ka oho, kangaro ki hiva!" (May it be lost in a foreign country!) Sometimes the cord was buried under stone, and a charm pronounced over it: "Ka noho hiohio koe i toou kainga!" (May you stay strong in your country!) The land in which the umbilical cord was concealed was tapu; if anyone trod upon it, his legs were covered with white spots (*kino*). Ahu Hanga-varevare, near Tahai, is one of the places where navel cords were hidden. In 1886 Easter Island natives told Thomson that the people who walked over certain rocks near Ana-hoi-hangaroa were afflicted with sore feet. Thomson (215, p. 484) remarks, "We received many solemn warnings in regard to it."

Immediately after birth the child was washed in a large calabash filled with warm water heated with hot stones. According to Knoche (121, p. 660) hot, flat stones were applied to the stomach of the mother after childbirth, to keep the waist without folds. I heard no mention of this custom and the pitiful condition of young women after several childbirths does not testify to the efficiency of this precaution. A woman who has had children is called *heipara*. The same word applies to a plant which produces young shoots.

BIRTH FEAST

A feast was celebrated on the day of the child's birth (*te topanga*). The father's family presented a gift of food to the mother's family. As at the pregnancy feast, the woman ate first or, at her suggestion, her husband started the meal. It was forbidden to cook sweet potatoes in the oven. The oven was tapu and refuse was buried carefully in the ground. Two feasts were given for the first-born child only, whose name was given by the father's brother or sister.

CHILDHOOD

A small child, until he is 6 months old, is a *puepue*; at 6 months he becomes a *poki-tua-huri* (child-who-can-turn). When the child was 6 or 7 months old, his father's brother cut his hair with an obsidian point (*mataa*). At the same time a brother or cousin of his mother gave him a basket containing three or five chickens. This ceremony was called *puoko varu* (hair cutting). When the child began to creep, a maternal uncle gave him a basket with fowls (*kete hakaraka*, basket of crawling). Another present was given to him when he put on his first breechcloth of tapa (*hami-haka-hune*). At 8 or 10 years of age he was tattooed on his legs. At this time his maternal uncle offered him 20 or 30 fowls called *moa o te kona* (fowls for the legs) which became tapu; they could not be eaten by the family but could be traded to a foreigner or transferred to another family, according to the rules of the *koro* (p. 346).

The child was surrounded by many tapus. His head was considered sacred

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

down again to the other. "The only restriction was that which forbade marriage" before the fourth generation—that is, it only went down to and included second cousins; so that third cousins might marry. 582

A tale dictated by my informant expresses the horror inspired by incest and the punishment that threatened those who committed this crime. The word *paakeake* applies to the act of committing incest with a cousin. 684 835

A man whose name was Taropa had sexual intercourse at night with his cousin. The girl asked, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Taropa." The girl said, "Do not touch me. You are my cousin." "No," replied Taropa, "it does not matter if you do not speak about it." He grasped the girl firmly to violate her. All the time she was protesting, "No, no, I am your cousin," but Taropa did not listen to her. In the end she grew tired of the struggle, and the man put his hand between her legs. He copulated with her. When he finished, he left and ran away. She took the sperm, put it into a piece of tapa, and kept it. At dawn she took it to her father and said, "Here is a bundle belonging to Taropa. He slept with me." The father took the bundle and put it aside. A war broke out between the Tupa-hotu and the Miru. The people fled and hid in a cave called Anatetehe-tama. The young Taropa also hid there. The father of the girl whom Taropa had violated was among the enemies. They took the people of Tupa-hotu and killed them. Taropa went out, and the girl's father cut his throat with the bone of a swordfish. He took the blood and drank it because this Taropa had slept with his own cousin.

Infant betrothal was apparently a widespread custom in olden days. Children whose parents were friends were often engaged to each other, the bride being supposedly chosen by the boy's father, especially if he were a chief. Child marriages were celebrated with the same formalities as those of the adults but the children were not allowed to live together until mature. In the only concrete instance of such a union the boy was 12 years old and the girl was the same age or younger (87, p. 29; 54, p. 717; 86, p. 39). Traditions persisting today about infant betrothal may be summarized as follows: 584

A little girl was considered the prospective wife of an adult man who waited until she became mature. The bridegroom's father brought food for his future daughter-in-law, and his present was called *taku te hunonga ma taana poki* (present of the father-in-law to his child). The father of the boy filled big baskets with fowls and carried them to the girl's house. On the other hand, an adult woman might be engaged to a little boy who received presents from his future father-in-law. 584 431

Girls often bear their first child when they are 15 or 16 years old. At marriage a woman may already have several children, frequently by different fathers. The husband does not object to the children and assumes responsibility for them as if they were his own. Widows usually marry again and there are a few women who have had three or four husbands in succession. 848 587

According to Geiseler (87, p. 29), young men married between the ages of 17 and 20. Each built a hut of his own where the girl to whom he was betrothed came to live. Geiseler states that only married men were allowed to bear the vulva motif tattooed on their chest. As this is not recorded elsewhere it is probably a misinterpretation. 582 591 304 831

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

643 Now he makes the crayfish good to eat and the *poopoo* fish, the moss, the ferns, the
778 *hetuketu-atua* plants.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
533 The mosses, the ferns, the *hetuketu-atua* plants, the king makes grow in the country.
539 Now he makes the mosses favorable, makes the ferns favorable, he makes the roots of the *hetuketu-atua* favorable.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
He introduces the tuna fish, the *atu* fish, and the *aturi* fish.
Now he makes the tuna fish favorable, he makes the *atu* favorable, he makes the *aturi* favorable too.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
The yams, the taro, the sweet-potatoes the king makes grow in the country.
Now he makes the yams, the sweet-potatoes, the sugar cane, the shoots favorable in the country, in the shade.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
The turtle, its abdominal shell, its legs—these he makes grow in the country.,
Now he makes the turtle, its abdominal shell and its legs favorable.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
The stars, the sky, the heat, the sun, the moon, the king makes fertile there above.
Now he makes the sky, the heat, the sun, and the moon favorable.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
Going up, he makes the dew, the heat, the sun, the moon favorable.
Now he makes dew, the heat, the sun, the moon favorable.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
The chiefs, the chiefesses he makes favorable in the country.
Now the king makes the chiefs, the chiefesses favorable.
What does the king make fertile in the country?
Worms, earwigs, beetles, the king makes fertile in the country.
Now he makes the worms, the earwigs, the beetles favorable, he makes them grow in the country.

643 The first fruits of all the products of the land were presented to the king
241 with great ceremony (described by Roussel, 190, p. 360). "Only the king could initiate the harvesting of crops which were tapu as long as he ordered them to be."

643 Certain priestly functions related to nature were incumbent on the king.
782 In time of drought he must send his son or another *ariki-paka* to perform rites beseeching Hiro to make rain fall. It may be assumed that the king also prayed to Hiro for rain, that he had something to do with the fertilizing of the fields, and that his power was beneficial to chickens.

SUPERVISION OF SEMI-RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

643 Assisted by a priest, the king had to eat in every house before it could
845 be occupied by its owners. He also had to perform rites on a new boat. All
553 twins were presented to him to be given a "royal name." I was unable to
342 obtain details about this name or the mystical beliefs connected with twins.

Tradition tells that the recently tattooed young men gathered in Anakena
643 and exhibited their designs to the king who sat on the head of an old image
304 to examine them. If he was satisfied with the work of the artist, he said to the young man, "Ka hoa ki Tuna-roa" (Go to the ahu Tuna-roa), but if he

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

643
304

considered the motifs poor, he said to the unfortunate bearer, "Ka hoa ki ahu runga" (Go to the lower ahu). He criticized the form and size of the ear piercings and probably the ornaments worn in them.

The king's interest in the reading of the tablets by the *rongorongo* men and his knowledge of the script is discussed later (pp. 390-391). 643

ROYAL INSIGNIA

The legend of Rokoroko-he-tau (p. 130) tells how the people brought wreaths (*mukomuko*) and standards (*huhu*) to the first-born children of the king. Those who presented the first fruits to the young king Gregorio were accompanied by two files of boys holding branches of *hau*, peeled and stained dark. The symbolism of such ensigns is not known, but they were probably brought before the king as a token of respect. Natives still remember such sacred ornaments and tell how once each month the people went to Anakena to present the *ariki-mau* with *huhu* and *maru*. (Tepano insisted, however, that the presentation was made once a week.) My informant translated the word *huhu* as "standard" and described it as a pole with three to five small, red, white, or black sticks inserted into it. The ends of these sticks were decorated with cock feathers, and the top bore a long feather garland (*maru* ?). Similar ones are still made by the natives for trade. The *huhu* and *maru* were planted in the ground in front of the king's house and left there until they rotted. Standards, used as marks of honor and friendship, were carried before some of the early voyagers who landed on Easter Island (18, p. 128; 53, vol. 1, p. 281). 643 644 554

Te Haha, who in his youth was attached to the court of King Nga-ara, told Routledge (194, p. 242) that " . . . if the people wanted chickens, they applied to the Ariki-mau, who sent him with *maru*, and his visits were always attended with satisfactory results."

POLITICAL POWER

The king was not a ruler in the ordinary sense of the word. Roussel (190, p. 260) makes the following general statement concerning the king's influence in the political system of the island that seems to be very near the truth: 643

> In late times, although the kings were still surrounded with respect by the natives who considered their persons to be sacred, their authority was nil and entirely disregarded. It has passed entirely into the hands of the mata-toa [warriors] who decided everything and carried on the war without beforehand consulting his majesty.

Thomson (215, p. 473) states that the ancient government was an arbitrary hereditary monarchy. The king ruled over the entire island and was never involved in intertribal wars. "Disputes were settled by the king without regard for law or justice. No great homage was paid him and no tax was expected of the people."

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

cation is based upon minor characteristics of the plants. I collected the following 24 names of supposed taro varieties:

Taro-vaiki, vaiki-iti, keiu-anga-mea, hore-hore-tapatea, tua-koiro, pia nguku-haka-tea, ngeti-tea-tea, ngaatu, hara-hara, tea-tea, koro-maruu, mango, taro-keiu-turi, kape Rapanui, taro-ngeti-uriuri. The *hiva taro* (foreign taro) is subdivided into *taro-uriuri* and *taro-teatea*. The commonest form is the *hara-hara*.

Arum, *kape* (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*) is mentioned in the creation chant collected by Thomson (p. 321): "Acridness copulating with Bad Taste produced the Kape." The name of this species, which is akin to taro, was given to me in the list of taro names. It was probably introduced on the island in early time and is still cultivated.

Yam

Yams, *uhi* (*Dioscorea* sp.), have ceased to be cultivated, though some still grow wild on the inner side of the crater of *Rano-kao*. The natives seem to have held them in higher esteem in olden times, for all of the travelers of the eighteenth century allude to them as one of the principal staple foods of the natives. Today the islanders think yams tasteless, and during my whole stay I was offered them only once. Martinez (151, p. 37) lists the following 41 yam names:

Pua-rau-oho-uri, pua-rau-oho-tea, pua-tiveka, pua-aru-aru, pua-rona, pua-tahi, eihe, ihe-matao-raha, ihe-mutu-po, nahe, nahe-mataa-toka, nahe-rehe-rehe, ravi, ravi-uri, ravi-tea, ravi-a-kurakura, tea-ho-popo, tea-makuna, tea-nuhi, veri-aka-tau, moko-haha-tea, veri-pupuru, rua-papa, tuke ipuakere, tuke taro kura, tupere-uri, tupere-tea, moko-iku-keu, papake-tea, apuku eu, kunekune, pa, erere, kukuru toua, mine, papake-uri, papake-kahu-kahu, anaukaho, ravei, ravei mangamanga, ravei pako, ekoka rua ravei.

Yams were planted in carefully made mounds of earth. Overgrown yams which become hard are called *kane*. Tubers eaten by worms are said to be *momo*.

Ti

The ti (*Cordyline fruticosa*) is mentioned for the first time by Palmer (171, p. 170) in 1868. He writes that the plant "is pretty plentiful, but is put to no other use than for wattling of the grass houses and as javeline shafts." The ti has become extremely rare. I saw only a few plants, growing wild near La Pérouse Bay; there are, or were, specimens in Rano-kao. Charred ti leaves supplied the black powder (*ngarahu*) which was used for tattooing.

Sugar Cane

Sugar cane, *toa (Saccharum officinarum)*, is first referred to by Roggeveen (186, p. 13), who lists it among the products brought to him in great quantities. The sugar-cane stalks which G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 571) noticed near a house "were about nine or ten feet high, even in this parched country, and

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

Islanders in 1856, saw several European boats in possession of natives. He thinks that few canoes were made on the island. One of my informants, a woman of good judgment, told me that while fishing her grandfather was carried by a storm to Salas y Gomez reef, 200 miles from Easter Island. On his return he had a boat tattooed on his cheek to commemorate his adventure. If this voyage was actually made, it was certainly on a whaleboat.

When Eyraud went to the island for the first time the natives insisted that he build a boat for them. The missionary was reluctant, for he doubted that the wood supply was sufficient for that. The natives, who were not disheartened, shouted, "We have more wood than we need," and they collected every available scrap. With their help, Eyraud built a boat, which proved wholly inadequate when launched. When an Easter Islander, who had been absent for a few years, returned, chiefs with their retainers seized the boat on which he was coming ashore and fought for its possession until the boat was destroyed (230, vol. 6, p. 121).

These incidents express strikingly a deep-rooted love of navigation, despite the handicaps of nature.

Comparison with Other Polynesian Canoes

The Polynesians who colonized Easter Island must have traveled in double canoes. This is substantiated by the tradition that Hotu-matua and his followers arrived in two boats lashed together. The expression "a piece of wood," that Hornell (109, p. 103) interprets as referring to a raft, is an erroneous translation of the word *oraora*, the name of the craft on which traveled the six scouts sent by Hotu-matua (p. 56).

Easter Island canoes, though poor, retained traits which connect them with boats of other more favored parts of Polynesia. The typical raised ends of Easter Island canoes are characteristic of those in the Tuamotus (old model of a canoe), the Marquesas, New Zealand, Hawaii, and Mangareva. The upturned ends of Easter Island canoes (fig. 18, *a*) had a spatulate form which might be compared with the curved terminal of Hawaiian canoes, though these are much lower.

Evidence that double-outrigger canoes existed on Easter Island is exceedingly weak, resting solely on Choris' drawing. However, it has been accepted by Dixon (60, p. 76) who considers the supposed Easter Island double outrigger to be a sign of former, wider distribution of this type in Polynesia. As other proofs of the presence of double outriggers in Polynesia, Dixon refers to New Zealand, the Marquesas, and Samoa about which he is dubious. Hornell (109, pp. 31, 198) discards, with convincing arguments, the former existence of the double outrigger in New Zealand and in the Marquesas. A loose use of words is responsible for the statement that double outriggers exist in Samoa (109, p. 239). If the double-outrigger canoe was

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

bird feathers are frequently mentioned by early voyagers to the Tuamotus; the only known specimen is formed by split black feathers lashed successively to some foundation hidden by the spiral turns of a continuous 2-ply sennit cord (74). This technique is fundamentally like that of Easter Island. A feather ornament described by Linton (142, p. 433) from the Marquesas is not properly a circlet, since it ties under the chin. However, the feathers project on the head as in the Easter Island circlet. The quills of the feathers are wrapped against a core of twisted coconut fiber.

The only parallel which may be proposed for the Easter Island conical feather hats are the cone-shaped sennit skull caps of the Cook Islands which were sometimes covered with feathers tied to light rods (33, p. 92). It must be stressed, however, that this analogy is purely superficial, since the basic techniques are different.

If the Easter Islanders actually wore in their hair bunches of feathers attached to small sticks, this ornament was probably similar to the long feathers attached to smooth sticks which were used in the Marquesas (142, p. 434) and in the Tuamotus (74).

Ear Ornaments

Both men and women had their ear lobes pierced and the lobes distended "to near three inches in length" (53, vol. 1, p. 291).

These holes were pierced with a sharpened stick. At first only the point of the stick was left in the hole, but gradually the thicker part of the implement was pushed forward to widen the opening. Then a sugar cane leaf, a strip of bark, or white down of feathers rolled up like a scroll was inserted in the opening and gradually stretched. Finally the ear lobe became like a thin strap which fell down on the shoulder.

It is impossible to tell whether the elastic substances were actually ornaments or were used to keep the holes at utmost extension. Probably they were both. Some people, when not wearing any ornament, turned the rent lobe over the upper part of the ear.

Another kind of ear ornament, probably used only on exceptional occasions or by certain persons, was the ear plug described by Roggeveen (186, p. 15) as "roundish or oval, having a diameter of about two inches measured through the widest section, and one and a half inches through the narrowest, being three inches, at a guess, in length." These ornaments were of carved shark vertebrae (*ivi mango*), but some must have been made of shells. (See 53, vol. 1, p. 291.) One such shark-bone ornament, in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, has been published by Ratzel (184, vol. 2, p. 44). Palmer (171, p. 172) writes that he obtained an ear ornament of wood, the size of a fist, carved into faces and joined together. As there is no reference to wooden ear ornaments (for Behrens, on whose authority Palmer relies, speaks of white balls, without indicating the material), it is probable that the ornaments he gathered are simply *tahonga* (wooden pendants), which his de-

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

scription fits rather well. The way ear plugs were inserted into the ear is well described by Roggeveen (186, p. 15):

> To understand how these supposed silver plates are fixed in the ears as ornaments one must know that the lobes of this people's ears are stretched from their youth up; and their centre is slit open, in such wise that the lesser rim of the plug, being stuck through the opening of the lobe, is then pushed on towards the thicker end, which accordingly faces towards the front, and completely stuffs the opening.

The custom of stretching the lobe of the ear lasted until the arrival of the missionaries. In 1886, Thomson (215, p. 463) saw some persons with such long ear lobes that they hung on the shoulders. In 1914, Routledge (194, p. 220) knew two or three old women with widely perforated ears. The men must have abandoned the custom before the women, for Beechey (15, p. 52) noticed that "the custom is not so general with the men as formerly." Eyraud (81, vol. 38, p. 67) regards this deformation as peculiar to the women. Yet in his youth, Tepano knew some men who had their ears mutilated; he even gave me their names. The Long-Ears probably disappeared about the end of the first half of the nineteenth century (p. 73).

Neck Ornaments

BONE ORNAMENTS

The only conspicuous neck ornament used by both sexes in everyday life was "a flat piece of bone in the shape of a tongue, or like a laurel leaf" (83, vol. 1, p. 561). (See also 53, vol. 1, p. 291.) The natives informed Forster that this ornament, which was about 5 inches long, was made of porpoise bone (*ivi-taoraha*, fig. 27, *a*).

SHELL ORNAMENTS

Flat shells worn as ornaments round the neck are mentioned by Roggeveen (186, p. 22). Until recent times sea shells (*repu reva*), not unlike patellas, were prized ornaments. According to Geiseler (87, p. 49), these shells were suspended from cords made of hair worn round the neck; however, the cord for a shell ornament in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (VI.4936), is made of vegetable fibers; some identical shells in Bishop Museum (B3577), labeled Easter Island, are suspended by coconut-fiber cord, which makes their Easter Island origin doubtful.

A shell pendant in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (VI.4936), is round and flat with a suspension hole near one edge. The suspension cord is attached through the hole by a half hitch knot. The shell is white with yellow lines and is 73 mm. long.

In Bishop Museum (fig. 27, *b*) there is a fragment of a shell pendant whose roughly oblong shape resembles the bone plate described above. It is the only known specimen of this kind.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

Tortoise-shell Belts

Formerly, "when there were kings in Easter Island," turtles were caught by the natives both for their meat and for their shell. Tradition tells that in olden days the men wore tortoise-shell belts (*honu-toro*). During my stay on the island I received from a native some tortoise-shell plates which had been found in a cave. They had small suspension holes.

These plates are of two forms. Most of them are ellipses and have holes in groups of two, set in a row along one edge (fig. 27, *c*, 1). Others are tongue-shaped with holes along the straight edge (fig. 27, *c*, 2). Of the first type the largest specimens are between 320 and 340 mm. long and 125 and 132 mm. wide. The smallest are 260 mm. long and 90 mm. wide. The plates of the second type are 170 to 180 mm. long and 73 mm. wide.

It is difficult to get a clear idea of the original appearance of the ornaments made from such plates. They are so long that it seems impractical to have them tied around the waist and the two forms do not combine. Since all definite information is lacking we are forced to accept the tradition and consider the plates as pieces of ceremonial belts.

Comparisons with Other Polynesian Ornaments

Deformation of the ear lobe to introduce wooden or bone plugs is restricted in Polynesia to Easter Island. The nearest parallel is found in the Marquesas where men and women used to wear in their ears heavy bone ornaments which distorted the lobes, but never to such an exaggerated size as on Easter Island (104, p. 288). In the Tuamotus the men pierced their ears to introduce ornaments but they never deformed their lobes. The Maoris must have had large holes in their ears in order to wear in them the objects mentioned by early observers. However, no reference has been made to an abnormal stretching of the lobe (20, vol. 2, pp. 535-540). Maori ear ornaments cannot well be compared to the plugs of Easter Island since most of them were pendants of bone or stone. Maoris, like Easter Islanders, occasionally wore strips or rolls of *aute* bark in their ears. The ear deformation of the Easter Islanders has been emphasized as a culture trait suggesting Melanesian affinity. Though enlargement of the ear occurs in Melanesia, it is not general and the Easter Island fashion may well have developed locally. The big ear plugs of the Marquesas are sufficiently close to the Easter Island ornaments to serve as an intermediate link between the custom of piercing the ear and of enlarging the lobe for insertion of pieces of wood or bone.

The oval plates of Easter Island, worn on cords round the neck, were substitutes for the whale teeth pendants common in other parts of Polynesia. The tongue-shaped neck ornaments resemble those worn by the Maoris in the time of Captain Cook (100, p. 20). The broken shell plaque (fig. 27, *b*) may be compared to the Marquesan plaques ground from the large end of a species of *Conus*. Linton (142, p. 428) attaches great importance to this ornament because it is rare in Polynesia but common in Micronesia. Since only one specimen is recorded from Easter Island, the parallel is of little significance.

1: Metraux · E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

and was then put into a piece of tapa and wrung (*hahahihi* or *totou*). The liquid and starch (*pia*) were strained (*tohe*) into a calabash (*hi roto hi te ipu*), where the starch settled to the bottom. The water was decanted or left to evaporate. All my informants agreed that the latter process consisted in leaving the starch in the air to dry (*he tauaki mo hakapakapaka*). Probably the *renga* was cooked in special containers as on Mangareva and Samoa. The yellow powder which was obtained after this long preparation was mixed with sugar-cane juice and rubbed on the body. The sugar-cane juice (*pua oiru*) used as an adhesive came from dry stalks peeled with an obsidian knife and pounded between two stones (*tingitingi*). This sticky substance was mixed with both turmeric and *ngarahu* (charred ti leaves).

G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 564) writes on the application of dye to the body: "The women were seldom satisfied with their natural brown colour, but painted the whole face with a reddish brown ruddle, over which they laid on the bright orange of the turmeric root; or ornamented themselves with elegant streaks of white shell-lime." Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 48) describes the painting of the natives as follows: "Some [men] had their faces painted black, some red, others black and white, or red and white, in the ludicrous manner practised by our clown, and two demon-like monsters were painted entirely black." According to Eyraud (81, vol. 38, p. 56) the women used only red colors, whereas the men smeared themselves with any kind of dye. Some idea of the face painting of the natives can be gained from a tapa image in the Peabody Museum (fig. 30).

The head of the image is banded from the top of the skull to the mouth, by eight broad strips of black, white, and orange. The mouth region is stained in orange (turmeric). The black bands could represent tattooing but they are darker than the actual tattooed surfaces and combine with the white and orange stripes that undoubtedly represent painting. This image may not be the exact model of a painted and tattooed man, for there is no indication of hair; the painted stripes could have been arranged in this fashion only if the individual had been carefully shaven.

For dyeing cloth the dry starchy turmeric was diluted with water and applied to the cloth with a brush made of feathers (*huruhuru moa*). A very simple method of dyeing consisted in chewing the turmeric and spitting the dyed saliva on the cloth. The sheets stained in this manner were called *pua roiroi*. The cloth made now for trade is decorated with fanciful designs drawn with a piece of turmeric moistened in water.

Tattooing

Implements

The art of tattooing (*ta*) was abandoned shortly after the arrival of the missionaries. It was practiced by experts (*maori* or *takona*) whose work was supervised by the king. Their implements were a tattooing comb (fig. 32, *a*), a wooden mallet, and a calabash or box containing dark pigment.

Easter Island tattooing combs (*uhi*) are preserved in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (VI.4921) and in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna (22830-22834). The

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

413 combs are made of bird bones with the convex surface at the front. The length varies between 75 mm. and 90 mm. and the maximum width between 7 and 8 mm. The comb tapers toward the rounded butt or is slightly constricted near the top to facilitate lashing to the handle (fig. 32, *a*). The distal end has five to seven teeth.

[304] To puncture the skin, the operator struck on the tattooing comb with a wooden mallet (*miro-pua-uhi*). A mallet in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (VI.4921b), is a plain stick of *hau* 420 mm. long.

386 The pigment (*ngarahu* or *kere*) was prepared from charred ti leaves mixed with *poporo* (*Solanum nigrum*) juice. It was kept in a little wooden box or wrapped in a piece of tapa (87, p. 51).

302
304
532

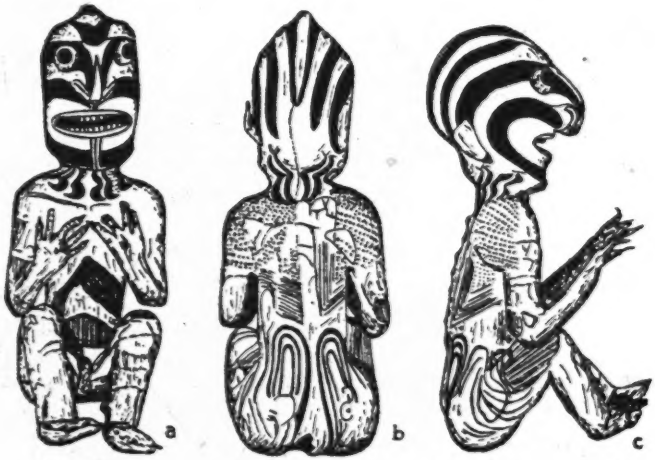

FIGURE 30.—Image made of bulrushes tied together with fiber bands (paper mulberry bast ?) and covered completely with tapa painted to represent body painting and tattooing (Peabody Mus., Cambridge, 53543): *a*, front; *b*, back; *c*, side; white, black, and orange colors; eyes made of circles covered with tapa and sewn onto head covering; ears of folded tapa sewn to temples, teeth of tapa sewn to gums; fingers and toes made of wood splinters; sewing of tapa with *hau* strings hardly visible; total height 39 cm.

DESIGNS

Sources of Information

304 There are only two tattooed persons still living on Easter Island: old Viriamo, Tepano's mother and Ana Eva Hei, the wife of Atamu Te Kena, one of the last "kings" of Easter Island. Viriamo has tights entirely of blue. Ana Eva Hei has two parallel stripes crossing her forehead from one ear to the other and the inner edge of the ear tattooed (134, p. 256). The design on her lower jaw is composed of a triangular figure which meets an oval design, together forming an open angle. Her hands are covered with

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

thin blue lines reminiscent of mittens. Neither woman is completely tattooed. Viriamo refused to submit to further sittings after the tights were covered with tattooing because the operation was too painful. Ana Eva Hei, who is younger, was probably decorated when the last experts were dying.

The best source for ancient tattooing designs are three images, two in the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, Massachusetts (53542, 53543) and one in the Belfast Museum. They are made of bulrush and covered with sheets of tapa on which are painstakingly reproduced the elaborate patterns of a fully tattooed person (figs. 30 and 31). Equally valuable are the photographs and the sketches made by Stolpe (214) of an Easter Islander whom he met in the Marquesas.

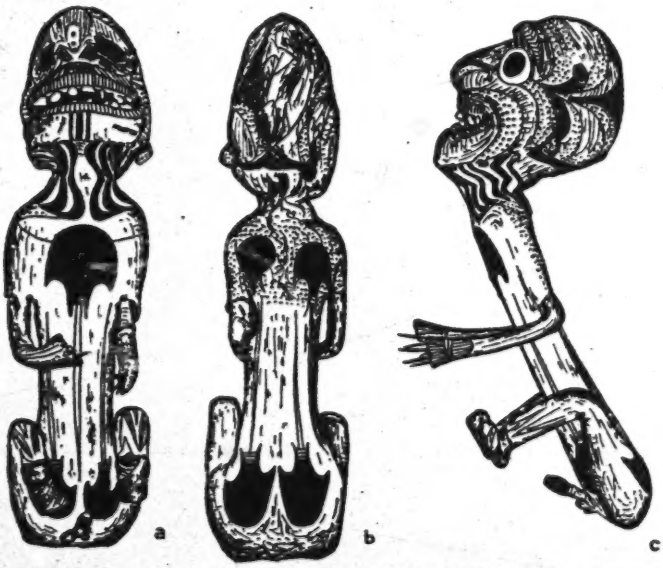

FIGURE 31.—Image made of bulrushes tied together with fiber bands and covered with tapa, technique identical to that of image shown in figure 30 (Peabody Mus., Cambridge, 53543): *a*, front; *b*, back; *c*, side; maximum length of head 19 cm.; spear head on chest 7.7 cm. long; marks on forearms indistinct (possibly a bird figure on right arm); legs tattooed in chevrons and triangles; erect penis reddish; total height 46 cm.

Other evidence on tattooing is provided by sketches made by travelers and reproduced in their narratives. Some of these graphic representations are supplemented by short descriptions in the text (90, p. 98). The oldest drawing of a tattooed Easter Island native was made by Hodges, the artist on Cook's second voyage (53, vol. 1, p. 291). Choris (49) sketched a fully

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304 114 tattooed man during his visit to Easter Island, but his drawing is inaccurate in many details. The artist of Du Petit-Thouars' expedition (65, pl. 44) drew a man and a woman, both partially tattooed. The accurate portraits of tattooed Easter Islanders by Pierre Loti (145, pp. 66-68) and the more schematic designs by Thomson (215, p. 466, fig. 4, *a-b*) have contributed to the preservation of knowledge about tattooing. In 1911 Knoche (123, pl. 13, p. 160) drew the last Easter Island woman with elaborate designs on her body. A few years later, Routledge (194, p. 219) was obliged to depend on the memories of the old men for analysis of ancient motifs. The reconstruction of ancient tattooing made for her by Tepano is not inaccurate but simplified and purely schematic. The wooden images can be used in the reconstruction of the old tattooing patterns; the oldest ones generally have a human figure carved in relief on the top of the head. An attentive examination reveals conventionalized tattooing motifs incised on the faces of these figures.

304 In the following analysis of the various Easter Island tattoo motifs, the most elaborate design for each region of the body is used as a basis. Information from literature is used to complete descriptions or to emphasize the persistence of fundamental motifs, which were repeated on all individuals, both male and female, and were faithfully preserved from one generation to the next. Geiseler (87, p. 36) contradicts evidence when he writes: "We looked for a constant pattern, which we were unable to find. Everyone had different signs. The persons which were shown to us as being the chiefs were the most tattooed, but their motifs were also different." It is true, however, that personal taste varied the general patterns. Perhaps different tribes or subtribes had favorite designs, but in general the selected motifs depended on patterns. Even Geiseler admits that certain designs were more common than others.

Extent of Tattooing

Tattooing is mentioned by nearly every voyager who touched at Easter Island. Though there were probably differences between the motifs used by men and by women, the features noticed by early observers are common to both. There is no way of determining the variations in designs for the two sexes. However, Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 290) says that the women, in contrast to men, were only slightly marked.

It appears from the reports of early travelers that the extent of tattooing varied with individuals. In the greater number, tattooing was confined to small surfaces of the body (15, vol. 1, p. 53). Kotzebue (127, p. 140) noticed [566] that "they were all tattooed and those who are over the whole body have the appearance of chiefs." This remark is probably correct as full tattooing in Polynesia is, as a rule, an expression of wealth.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304 The graphic documents confirm the observations of voyagers. The only representations of a full tattooing are the tapa images referred to above and the man sketched by Choris (49, pl. 11). A young man represented by Loti (145, p. 68) has the face undecorated though the body is beautifully tattooed. The native whom Stolpe (214, pp. 4-5) studied so carefully had only the head decorated in the ancient style. The motifs on the rest of his person were few and unimpressive.

171 These variations in the extent of the tattooed surfaces are good evidence that on Easter Island as in the Marquesas, tattooing was a lengthy process that took place at different periods of life.

413

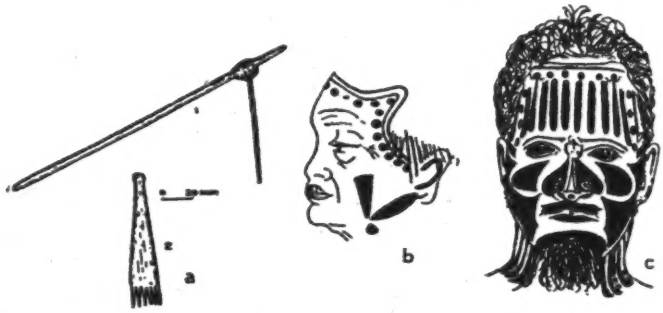

FIGURE 32.—Tattooing comb and tattooed face designs: *a*, tattooing combs of bird bone: 1, comb 75 mm. long lashed at right angles to a handle 203 mm. long with thin white tapa bound round in a ball and then lashed with thin thread; 2, comb with six teeth, slight constriction below knob, 88 mm. long, 8 mm. wide at lower end (Mus. f. Völkerkunde, Vienna); *b*, tattooing of woman's face (from Lavachery, 134, p. 256); *c*, tattooing of man's face, vertical stripes on forehead given human form by adding dot at upper end of tapering body and bent arms at side (from Stolpe, 214, fig. 4).

Face Designs

Forehead. Tattooing of the forehead was called *retu*. Two parallel, straight or curved lines banded the forehead just below the hair line and then continued down the temples, turning backward at the level of the eyes (fig. 32, *b*). If curved, the parallel lines were divided into three segments: one in the middle with the concavity up and the others on either side. A series of large dots (*humu* or *puraki*) always ran below and along the stripes. Six to ten vertical, fusiform, or straight, solid stripes filled in the remaining space (fig. 32, *c*). The parallel lines across the forehead and the fringe of dots were the first motifs tattooed on the face, as evidenced by the fact that they were present on persons whose tattooing remained unfinished. This pattern was the most general, since it is the one commonly recorded by the early voyagers.

The Easter Island man depicted in Du Petit-Thouars' atlas (fig. 33, *a*) has triangular patches on the temples and in the middle of the forehead. This tattooing may be oversimplified and perhaps is not entirely reliable.

Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 564) writes: "They are all prodigiously punctured on every part of the body, the face in particular; and their women who were very small and

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304 slender limbed had likewise punctures on the face, which resembled the patches worn by our ladies." These big dots were carefully reproduced by Hodges, the artist of Cook's expedition. Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 53) also describes this motif: "Some of them tattoo their forehead in arched lines as well as the edges of their ears and the fleshy parts of their lips." According to Palmer (171, p. 171), "in 1852 it was noticed in particular that they had a row of dots over the forehead close to the hair, which ran down to the lobes of the ears." Like Forster and Beechey, Geiseler (87, p. 53) seems to regard this pattern as appropriate for women: "Very often the women have on their face a heavy line which, crossing the forehead goes from one ear to the other. This line is curved and combined with a series of dots" (fig. 32, *b*). The same motif is analyzed by Thomson (215, pp. 466-467) as follows: "A narrow band around the upper part of the forehead, at the edge of the root of the hair, with little extending down upon the forehead to the band by a stem. From the coronet, a line extended round the outside edge of the ear, with a circle on the lobe." These various descriptions apply to the tapa image (fig. 31), whose forehead is crossed by several horizontal lines with the intermediate spaces filled with rows of dots. The schematic tattooing designed by Routledge's informants includes vertical stripes with dots on the forehead but lacks the parallel lines probably out of negligence.

Nose Region. A large isosceles triangle was generally tattooed on the top of the nose (figs. 30; 32, *c*). From the base of the triangle, short lines extended along the alae edges. On the tip of the nose there was a circle with a central dot. In figure 32, *c*, large triangular patches cover the sides of the nose and part of the alae and extend toward the cheeks. The "tattooed chief" sketched by Loti (145, p. 67) has a triangular stripe on the bridge of the nose, perhaps a careless representation of the usual triangle.

Eye Region. A dark stroke along the eyebrow runs parallel to a line tattooed on the upper eyelid. The lines meet a curved stroke which follows the inner corner of the eye, extending toward the triangle tattooed on the top of the nose. This pattern, called *matapea*, is figured in a sketch representing old tattooing designs drawn by Easter Islanders whom Stolpe interviewed in the Marquesas. The chevrons traced on the eyebrows of the tapa image (fig. 30) suggest a conventionalized representation of hair rather than tattooing. The same pattern is incised on wooden images. In Routledge's drawing (194, p. 219), the eye is entirely surrounded by a line which meets an oval design on the temples. The human figures carved on heads of wooden images show some tattooing around the eyes and a line extending from the corner of the eye toward the temples.

Cheeks. One tapa image (fig. 31) is decorated on the cheeks with two crescentic bands filled with dots. The upper band starts from the corner of the eyes and follows more or less the outline of the jaw. The lower band begins under the nose and covers the anterior part of the cheeks.

Very often cheeks were covered by solid triangular patches with somewhat rounded base or sides (fig. 32, *c*; 145, p. 67). Women tattooed in more recent time lack these patches and the only decoration of the cheeks consists of a motif called *tangehua*, formed by the meeting of two designs—one triangular and the other fusiform (fig. 32, *b*). According to Pinart (178, p. 239), this design symbolized a hafted stone ax. The same name was applied by Routledge's informant to an elongated oval figure at either corner of the mouth. Neither of the two designs is very suggestive of an adz or an ax, but there is little doubt that "stone adze" was the term for an ornament tattooed on the lower part of the cheek.

Mouth Region. A tattooed ring (*ngutu tika*) surrounded the mouth (figs. 30-31). This motif may be the same as that noticed by Geiseler (87, p. 36) on some persons, principally women, and described as "strokes the chin to the neck." Sometimes the upper lip was crossed by a band which tapered at both ends, not unlike a moustache (fig. 32, *c*). Most people had the mucous membrane of the lips entirely tattooed although some had it decorated with alternating bands of perpendicular strokes.

The chin was crossed by three vertical strokes descendinig from the mouth (figs. 30-31). This pattern was common but not general.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304

Ear Region. Only individuals who were bald or shaven could have had tattooing on the temporal region such as that indicated on the tapa images (figs. 30-31). The two crescentic bands filled with dots on the side of the head join the ends of a similar band traced above the higher part of the forehead. Seen from above these crescentic bands form a starlike figure, the center of which is painted black. The solid discs representing the ears are entirely covered with dots. A circle traced on the left temple is similar to a mark on the face of an Easter Island woman who was still living twenty years ago (123, p. 160).

Another motif for this region was a tattooed strip following the helix of the ear and sending ramifications to the cheeks. On some individuals a line extended "from the coronet round the outside edge of the ear with a circle on the lobe" (215, p. 467).

Neck Designs. The fundamental decoration of the neck (*ua*) consisted of four pairs of broad and wavy stripes. The spaces between were occupied by dots or by finer short lines which were each surmounted by a dot and ended in a series of squares or lozenges with central dots (fig. 32, *c*).

This typical pattern impressed early visitors. If Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 53) is not mistaken, this tattooing was essentially masculine. "The males tattooed themselves in curved lines of a dark Berlin blue color upon the upper part of the throat beginning at the ear, and sloping round below the under jaw." Thomson (215, p. 467) describes this design and Loti figures it (145, p. 68).

On the throat a conventionalized bird was figured with head turned down, elongated body, and wings reduced to four small strokes (figs. 34, *a-b*; 35, *e*). A superficial observer might mistake this figure for a frog or toad as did the officers of the Gonzalez expedition (90, p. 98). They give the word *cogé* as the native name for this figure. It suggests the name of the frigate bird, *makohe*, written *macoge* by Spanish-speaking people.

Typical neck tattooing has been carved on some stone images of Rano-raraku. The symbolic figuration of the vulva is painted on the nape of the neck of a tapa image. It occupies the same position as on the wooden images, when they are decorated with the conventionalized human being on top of the head.

Breast Designs

Clavicle lines were stressed by two stripes or dotted bands, running from one shoulder to the other. Under the throat of the tapa image in Belfast Museum (fig. 34, *a*) are two opposite hooked motifs formed by several parallel lines. Below is a symbolic representation of the vulva. The hooks recall the fishhook which Routledge (194, p. 219) says was tattooed on both sides of the breast at the level of the mammae. The tapa image at Belfast (fig. 34, *a*) has, in place of the fishhooks, two obsidian knives (*mataa*) conventionalized as they are on the tablets. The handles are neatly drawn and on both sides are strokes corresponding to lashing. In the reconstruction by Routledge's informant, identical *mataa*, turned upside down, appear below. The tapa image in the Peabody Museum (fig. 31) has a single *mataa* painted on the breast with a handle descending to the waist.

Two conventionalized branches, extending from belt to mammae, are the only breast designs on the young man depicted by Loti (fig. 33, *b*). Only slightly different from this motif is a slanting, tapering strip of blue color which crosses the right side of the breast of the man shown in figure 33, *a*.

Abdominal Designs

The lower part of the chest was decorated on either side by representations of the dancing paddle (*ao*; fig. 34, *a*). In figure 36, *a*, the *ao* is replaced by two human heads, the outlines of which resemble the dance paddle. Stolpe (214, p. 12) supposes that Thomson has slightly anthropomorphized the *ao*. The rounded blades of the *ao* are often provided with eyes, nose, and mouth. Thus the transition from the figure of a dance paddle to that of a man is a natural one. Conventionalized human heads with hairs, radiating like beams, were drawn by Routledge's informant as abdominal designs. Such

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304 a motif was observed and described in 1770 by the Spaniards (90, p. 98): "On the vacant part of the abdomen they depict two fearsome monstrosities (*rostros horrorosos*) which they call *pare*, and I believe they look on them with veneration, but they do not like one to touch them with the hand." As Routledge gives the name *pare-pu* to the two faces tattooed on the abdomen, there is no doubt that human figures, whether or not derived from the *so*, formed a traditional pattern for that part of the body. The word *pare* was given to me as designating a motif tattooed around the waist. On the abdominal region of the tapa image at Belfast (fig. 34, *a*) and one at the Peabody Museum (fig. 31) are representations of two obsidian spearheads, turned downward, which repeat the *mataa* tattooed on the breast. A standard motif had two large striped bands running obliquely across the abdomen, meeting at an open angle at the navel region (figs. 30, 34, *a*; 36, *a*). The band was surmounted on either side by two pairs of hooks or loops, back to back.

In contrast with the elaborate tattooing of his head, one native examined by Stolpe had only a small design on the front part of the body, above the navel, representing a conventionalized human figure treated in the style of the tablets (fig. 35, *b*).

302
304

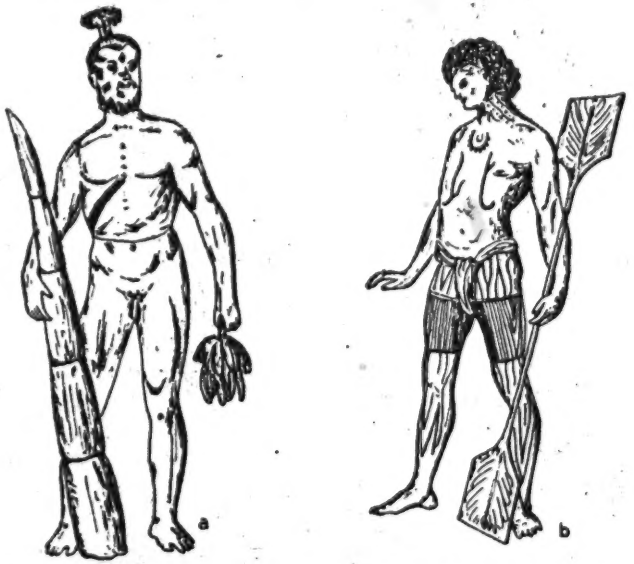

FIGURE 33.—Tattooing motifs: *a*, man with topknot holding a float (*pora*) made of reeds (after Du Petit-Thouars, 65, pl. 44); *b*, young man (from Loti, 145, p. 68).

Back Designs

304 In the examples known to us, back tattooing presents variations. On Thomson's sketch (fig. 36, *b*), the essential decoration of the back is a continuation of the two bands tattooed on the abdomen. The tattooed surface widens to cover the sides from the upper part of the thigh to the hips, then narrows into rounded ends curved upward and ending under the shoulder blades. The region between the shoulder blades is occupied by the outline of a dance paddle with its conventionalized eyes and nose. Very closely

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

804

related to this combination of patterns is the tattooing of an old woman sketched by Knoche (123, p. 160). In the middle of her back is a dance paddle 20 cm. long and 6 cm. wide treated more or less like that in figure 36, *b*. Along the lower part of the back, and under the *ao* is a stripe which winds back and forth. The same winding bands, terminated by a conventionalized bird head, cover the buttocks and the waist region of a tapa image (fig. 30). It is probably to this motif that the Spaniards refer in the following passage (90, p. 98): "In particular they figure on the back a maze of convolutions with so much skill that it excited our wonder, not a dot nor a line from right side to left side wanting in regularity." Girls sketched by Loti (145, p. 60), have back tattoos, which are strongly reminiscent of the motifs analyzed by Stolpe and Knoche. These are the most elaborate patterns recorded for this part of the body.

The man examined by Stolpe had on the right side of the spine a set of nine parallel lines, running vertically and bending to the right at the bottom (fig. 35, *c*). The vertical lines are surmounted by small motifs, difficult to recognize but evidently zoomorphic.

[531]

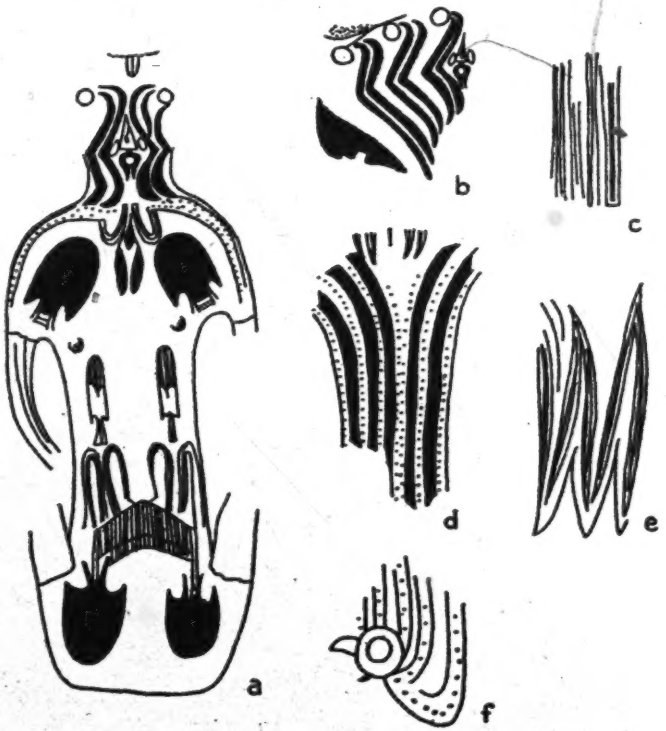

FIGURE 34.—Tattooing motifs (from Stolpe, 214, figs. 15-21): *a*, neck, chest, and abdomen designs; *b*, neck design, stylized bird with head pointed down and bordered by pairs of curved lines; *c*, upper part of thigh, parallel lines, some of them converging; *d*, back, orange-colored bands alternating with rows of dots; *e*, leg just below knee; *f*, hip, bird's beak joined to two concentric rings.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

304

(See also fig. 30.) The Belfast Museum tapa image is decorated with alternating groups of dots and orange-colored lines (fig. 34, *d*) which terminate on the hip in a conventionalized bird beak (fig. 34, *f*). The name of this back motif was probably *puroriki*. One tapa image (fig. 31) has a *mataa* on each shoulder blade surrounded by black dots and a downward pointing *mataa* on each buttock.

Many wooden images have two circles carved in relief on the lower back. Various old persons told Routledge (194, p. 220) that "they remembered seeing men with a pattern on the back similar to the rings of the girdle of the images."

[631]

FIGURE 35.—Tattooing motifs (from Stolpe, 214, figs. 10, 6-9, 14): *a*, anthropomorphic figures on forearm; *b*, figure placed on front of body about 9 cm. above navel and somewhat to the right; *c*, design on back, nine vertical parallel lines on right side of spinal column, significance of figures at top unknown; *d*, back of hand tattooed solid black except for sides of fingers and two bands near wrist; *e*, bird figure with head pointing downward on front of neck; *f*, design on top of head.

Hand and Arm Designs

The tattooing motifs on the arms of the tapa images are somewhat blurred. On figure 30, the tattooing consists of parallel strokes extending along the forearm and on to the back of the hand where they are interrupted by three horizontal strokes. The other image (fig. 31) shows the same parallel strokes on the forearm, but on the right arm there is a somewhat confused drawing that may represent a bird. Other blurred designs can be described as an arrow head (?) and portions of solid band.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

Native informants reconstructed an arm pattern for Routledge (194, p. 219) consisting of a continuous series of solid triangular designs terminating in unfilled ovals. 304 ●

Stolpe shows a forearm covered with anthropomorphic designs (fig. 35, *a*) and a hand of solid color except for two untattooed stripe (*pīria kona*) at the wrist (fig. 35, *d*).

These patterns of the hand were called *tuaha-ingoingo* by my informant and are listed in Roussel's vocabulary as "back tattooing."

Thigh Designs

Viriamo's thighs are covered with such fine stripes that at a distance they appear uniformly blue. Beechey (15, pp. 52-53) supposes that this tattooing was "in imitation of blue breeches; copied no doubt from some of their visitors, who frequently tuck up their trousers to the knee in passing through water." Thomson (215, p. 467) compares this tattooing of the thighs with "silk tights with variegated patterns" (fig. 36). This pattern was carefully drawn on the top part of the thighs of the tapa images (figs. 30, *c*; 34, *c*). The back part might be decorated by a conventionalized representation of a branch with leaves (fig. 36, *b*).

The thighs of the Easter Islander depicted by Choris are crossed by slanting solid bands. An Easter Island woman painted by Du Petit-Thouars' artist (65, pl. 44), has the inner side of the thighs tattooed in a continuous blue surface which gives the effect of a leather crotch on riding breeches. Loti shows the tattooing of the thigh divided into regions. The upper part of the thigh has an alternate series of angles, some of them with curved or undulating outline; the second region is separated from the first by a horizontal band (fig. 33, *b*). The lower part of the thigh is covered by fine perpendicular lines ending at another band above the knee. One Peabody Museum tapa image (fig. 31, *a*) has on the lower part of the thigh, above the knee, motifs that can be defined as chevrons and triangles.

Leg Designs

Choris shows men with slanting stripes on the legs similar to those on the thighs, but terminating at perpendicular parallel lines along the tibia. The tattooing of the leg (*kumu*), as indicated on the Belfast image (fig. 34, *e*), shows a series of long triangles within triangles, ending in a serrated border. The analogy of this motif with that shown in figure 33, *b*, is very striking. On the other hand, little analogy exists between this pattern and the sign of the tablets called *kumu i te vae* (tattooing of the legs). According to Thomson (fig. 36) the tattooing of the legs might have consisted of filled perpendicular bands, separated by stripes of natural color. Pinart (178, p. 239) mentions circular tattooing round the ankles.

Realistic Motifs

An outstanding feature of Easter Island tattooing is the number of realistic motifs used. Dance paddles, obsidian spear heads, plant branches, and human figures were parts of the ordinary pattern of any complete tattooing. Other subjects were represented according to the fancy of the individual. The Easter Islander met by Stolpe in Tahiti had a forearm tattooing which "made him a living chronicle of Easter Island" (fig. 38, *a*). The bearer of these designs explained them as a representation of the dragging to the landing place of the big image at the British Museum. The ten figures on the longitudinal line represent English sailors; the tall figure with a stick, the first officer; and the other figures the second officers. The little human image by the transverse statue above the elbow is a dancing chief. 304 532

It was probably customary to represent in tattooing some important incident in which the tattooed person had participated. My informant, Victoria Rapahango, told me that her grandfather who was taken by storm near the reef Salas y Gomez, had a canoe tattooed on his face when he returned. [211]

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TATTOOING

●304 [831] Little is known of the symbolic value of tattooing. According to Geiseler (87, pp. 29-36), the vulva tattooed on the breast was an ensign of married chiefs; according to Stolpe (214, p. 10) it indicated only that the young man who wore this mark had watched the carnal union of a couple.

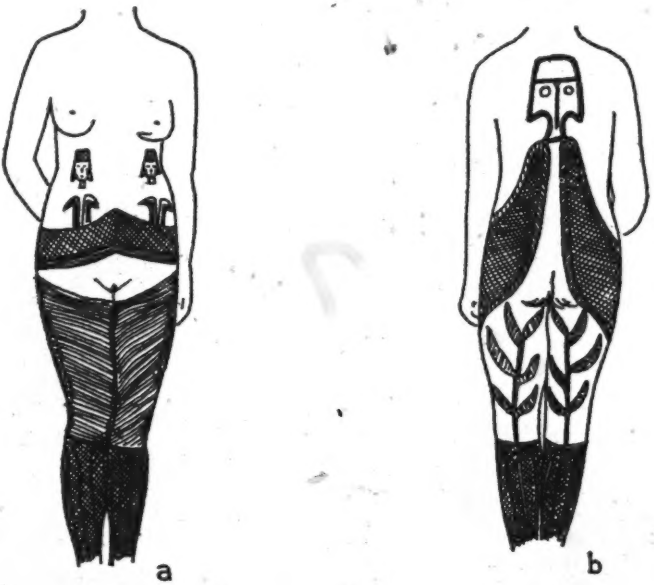

FIGURE 36.—Tattooing of a woman: *a*, front view; *b*, back view (from Thomson, 215, fig. 4).

[833] One of the tattooed old women interviewed by Knoche (171, p. 16) told him that the *rapa* tattooed on her back represented one of her first lovers. This tattooing was done in youth, after the first sexual intercourse.

[832] The natives sometimes interpreted figures on petroglyphs as tattoo patterns. Series of small concavities carved on the rocks, strongly suggest the dots tattooed across the forehead.

According to my informant, the first tattooing was made on the leg when a child was about eight years old. Geiseler (87, p. 35) states that young people were tattooed between their twelfth and their seventeenth year.

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

777 few years before Young's visit, Thomson had purchased from the natives what he calls a "fowl god" (*maea moa*, stone of fowls) which he describes (215, p. 537) as "a beach pebble with slight traces of tool-marks" that was placed under a setting hen before the eggs were hatched. Stones incised with designs of the vulva are common on the island and had no connection with the purported ceremony of the *hakatoro* (stretching of a girl's clitoris) as suggested by Young (229, p. 32). The stretching of the girl's clitoris (*repe*) was not a special rite, but a long process of deformation which lasted for years under the care of the girl's mother. Routledge counted 49 signs of the vulva (*komari*) on the rocks at Orongo and observes that the "*komari* is frequently found on hollow stones and elsewhere" (194, p. 449). The same symbol appears on a stone which was given to Thomson as a fish god (215, 778 p. 537):

> This rough, ill-shaped stone was one of the objects really worshipped by the natives. Some of them bear evidences of tool marks, but it does not appear that any effort was made to carve them. These gods were never common, and were possessed by communities or clans [lineages], and not by individuals. The legends claim that they were all brought to the island by Hotu Matua and the first settlers.

In a field near Mataveri we found a large stone, about 3 feet high, on which the conventionalized design of the big-eyed god was carved five times. The location of this stone in the middle of the cultivated grounds resembles strongly the *kumara* gods of New Zealand, which were temporary abiding-places for the *atua* and were placed in potato fields to insure a good harvest.

Natives still remember that formerly fishermen carried in their canoes 777 stones selected for their shape which were supposed to bring luck. Some 226 looked like fish, others like cocks, and some suggested the form of a man. They were called *maea ika* (stones for fish). There were special ones called *maea kahi* for the *kahi* fish. These, according to Thomson (215, p. 537), had "no distinguishing characteristics."

Amulets were buried in houses. Thomson got a fair collection of them by 777 digging beneath the door posts of ancient dwellings. "The majority are simply beach pebbles; others have been formed by rubbing; and one is a triangular-shaped stone with a face outlined upon it. These were placed beneath the houses, with much ceremony, and were supposed to ward off evil influences" (215, p. 538).

Natives frequently offered me stone blocks with natural holes which they [235] called "nests for hens." They insisted that these stones, not unlike enormous egg-cups, were "good" for the hens and caused them to lay eggs. This interpretation was confirmed by the discovery of some of these stones in an old chicken house.

> Among the "fetish stones" figured by Thomson (215, pl. 60, fig. 2) there is one identical with five stones in Bishop Museum (B3545) classified as "sharpening stones." All are elongated and have a more or less conical form. The porosity of the stones

5: Roggeveen T-5 (1721-1722)1908
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

301 vegetable,—as one might say in Holland, of good stout parsnips or carrots. This ear-ornament is roundish, or oval, having a diameter of about two inches[1] measured through the widest section, and one and a half inches across the lesser; being three inches, at a guess, in length. To understand how these supposed silver plates are fixed in [304] the ears as ornaments one must know that the lobes of these people's ears are stretched, from their youth up; and their centre is slit open, in such wise that the lesser rim of the plug, being stuck through the opening in the lobe, is then pushed on towards the thicker end, which accordingly faces towards the front, and completely stuffs the opening[2]. Furthermore, the mother-of-pearl which was seen as a neck pendant is a flat shell of the same tint as the inner lip of

---

[1] The term used by Roggeveen is *duymen*; literally thumbs or thumb's breadths, but the common Dutch expression when inches are meant, of which eleven go to the foot.

[2] For Behrens' account, see Appendix I. He states "Their ears were so long that they hung down as far as to the shoulders. Some wore white ornaments in the lobes as a special embellishment."

In M. de la Pérouse's narrative there is no mention of the ear slits, nor of the ear ornaments; nor even any general description of the natives. But his visit, which took place in 1786, only extended over a few hours; and his vessels were at anchor there only one night. His portrayal of the Easter Islanders is usually accounted the best; but the travelled and intelligent reader will find it difficult to concede this compliment, especially if he have read the younger Forster's description, and will incline to consider La Pérouse's account as much overrated in worth as it is charming in expression. Cook's and Forster's remarks on the ear ornaments are here given:—

"Both men and women have very large holes, or rather slits, in their ears, extending to near three inches in length. They sometimes turn this slit over the upper part, and then the ear looks as if the flap was cut off. The chief ear ornaments are the white down of feathers, and rings, which they wear in the inside of the hole, made of some elastic substance, rolled up like a watch-spring. I judged this was to keep the ear at its utmost extension. I do not remember seeing them wear any other ornaments, excepting amulets made of bone or shells." Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

"Their ears were remarkable for the great length of the lap, which frequently hung on the shoulder, and was pierced with so large a hole, that the extremity could be tucked up through it. In order to bring it to this size they wore a leaf of a sugar cane, which is very elastic, rolled up in it like a scroll; by which means it was always on the stretch." Forster, George, Bibl. no. 21.

8: Behrens T-5 (1721-1722) 1908
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

really seen land. Moreover the wind began to falter [*vagiren*] and shifted round towards the W., which, on coasts where the trade-wind prevails, is always a sign that one is not far from land. Still, to the great surprise of our Admiral, we saw no David's Land, so far; and it is my belief that either we overran it, or that there is no such land there. This at any rate is certain, that all the coast lines of the South Lands stretch for the most part East and West, or East, N. and West-South (*sic*); which may be a principal reason why this South Land has remained undiscovered by many [navigators] hitherto. One approaches the land on a W.N.W. course, and with a N.W. one leaves it behind altogether, which I ascertained by comparing the [positions of] all the Southern Lands already discovered and constructing a chart whereon it is clearly shown that navigators have passed in the near neighbourhood of land or, with a N.W. course have sailed right away from it.

We continued on another 12° to the westward of the longitude above mentioned, and had land birds and sea-fowl about us every day, who kept company with us until we at last sighted an island, on the 6th of April, being our first Easter Day[1], at which we were heartily pleased. And because it was on the day of the glorious resurrection of Our Lord that it appeared to us we at once named it Pasch Land, or 'Easter Land.' [It was] about eight miles in circumference[2]. Our African galley had got close in with the land and reported that the place appeared to be very fertile; moreover, that it must be inhabited, as smoke had been noticed rising in several places. Next day we stood in with our ships to look for a harbour, whereupon one of the natives came off in a small skiff [*schiffgen*] to meet us some two miles off the land. We took him aboard our vessel and gave him a piece of linen cloth to wrap about his body, for he was quite naked; and we offered him beads and other trinkets, all of which he hung round his neck together with a dried fish. He was very cleverly and regularly painted with all sorts of figures: he was of a brown tint, and had long ears which hung down as far as his shoulders as if they had been stretched to that length by being weighted, after the fashion of the Mongolian Moors. He was fairly tall in stature, strong in limb, of good appearance, and lively in mien, as well as pleasing in

[1] They had sailed from Holland on Aug. 1st of the foregoing year, 1721.

[2] German statute miles must here be meant.

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

X175
1774 MARCH. ance confirmed us in this opinion, and proved them iſſued
[142] from the ſame ſtock. They were of a middle ſtature, but
rather thin; their features reſembled thoſe of the Taheitians,
[302] but were leſs agreeable: one of them had a beard, which
was cut to the length of about half an inch; the other was
a youth of about ſeventeen. They had punctures of the
X175 ſame nature with thoſe uſed by the natives of the Society
304 and Friendly Iſlands and of New Zeeland; but their whole
body, which was perfectly naked, was marked with them.
The greateſt ſingularity which we obſerved about them was
the ſize of their ears, of which the lap or extremity was
ſtretched out ſo as almoſt to reſt on the ſhoulder, and pierced
by a very large hole, through which four or five fingers
might be thruſt with eaſe. This circumſtance entirely agreed
with the deſcription which the ſerjeant-major of Roggewein's
X175 ſhip gives of theſe people*. Their canoe was an-
501 other curioſity, being patched up of many pieces, each of
which was not more than four or five inches wide, and two
or three feet long. Its length might be about ten or twelve
feet, its head and ſtern were raiſed conſiderably, but its
middle was very low. It had an outrigger or balancer
made of three ſlender poles, and each of the men had a
paddle, of which the blade was likewiſe compoſed of ſeveral
pieces. This deſcription alſo exactly correſponds with the

* See Mr. Dalrymple's Hiſtorical Collection, vol. II. p. 90, 94, or Hiſtoire de l'Expedition de Trois Vaiſſeaux, tome I. p. 133, a la Haye 1739.

Dutch

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

ſhort. His ears were very long, almoſt hanging on his ſhoulders, and his legs punctured in compartments after a taſte which we had obſerved no where elſe. He had only a belt round his middle, from whence a kind of net-work deſcended before, too thin to conceal any thing from the ſight. A ſtring was tied about his neck, and a flat bone, ſomething ſhaped like a tongue, and about five inches long, was faſtened to it, and hung down on the breaſt. This, he told us, was a porpoiſe's bone (cevee toharra), expreſſing it exactly by the ſame words which a Taheitian would have made uſe of. To explain himſelf better, he alſo called it eevee-eeka, which we well underſtood to ſignify the bone of a fiſh *. He was no ſooner ſeated in the boat, than he complained of being cold by ſhivering, and making various geſtures of a very intelligible nature. Mr. Gilbert, the maſter, therefore gave him a jacket, and put a hat on his head, and in that dreſs he appeared upon deck. The captain and paſſengers preſented him with nails, medals, and ſtrings of beads, the laſt of which, he deſired to have tied round his head. At the beginning he ſhewed ſome marks of fear or diffidence, aſking whether we ſhould kill him as an enemy *(matte-toa?)* but upon being aſſured of good treatment and friendſhip on our part, he ſeemed perfectly ſecure and unconcerned, and talked of nothing but dancing

1774. March.

* Eoya at Taheitee, and eeka at New Zealand and the Friendly Iſles mean a fiſh.

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

564 X175 The general appearance of the natives seemed to argue a
1774 MARCH 142 great sterility of the country. They were inferior in stature to the natives of the Society and Friendly Isles, and to those of New Zeeland, there being not a single person amongst them, who might be reckoned tall. Their body was likewise lean, and their face thinner than that of any people we had hitherto seen in the South Sea. Their want of cloathing, and a great eagerness to obtain our goods without offering any thing in return, seemed altogether to be sufficient marks of poverty. They were all prodigiously [304] punctured on every part of the body, the face in particular; and their women, who were very small and slender limbed, had likewise punctures on the face, which resembled the patches sometimes worn by our ladies. The number of X175 women in the croud did not exceed ten or twelve; they were 302 seldom satisfied with their natural clear brown colour, but 386 painted the whole face with a reddish brown ruddle, over which they laid on the bright orange of the turmeric-root; or ornamented themselves with elegant streaks of white shell-lime. The art of painting is therefore not confined to those ladies who have the happiness to imitate French X175 fashions. The women were all dressed in pieces of cloth, 291 which appeared scanty when compared to the Taheitian dresses. Both sexes had thin, but not savage features, X175 though the little shelter which their barren country offers 142 against the sun-beams, had contracted their brows sometimes, and drawn the muscles of the face up towards the eye.

9: Forster T-5 (1774) 1777
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

eye. Their noſes were not very broad, but rather flat between the eyes; their lips ſtrong, though not ſo thick as thoſe of negroes; and their hair black and curling, but always cut ſhort, ſo as not to exceed three inches. Their eyes were dark brown, and rather ſmall, the white being leſs clear than in other nations of the South Seas. Their ears were remarkable for the great length of the lap, which frequently hung on the ſhoulder, and was pierced with ſo large a hole, that the extremity could be tucked up through it. In order to bring it to this ſize, they wore a leaf of a ſugar-cane, which is very elaſtic, rolled up in it like a ſcroll; by which means it was always on the ſtretch. The violent action of the ſun upon their heads has forced them to contrive various coverings for that part. Many of the men wore a ring about two inches thick, ſtrongly and curiouſly plaited of graſs, and fitting cloſe round the head. This was covered with great quantities of the long black feathers which decorate the neck of the man of war bird. Others had huge buſhy caps of brown gulls feathers, which were almoſt as large as the full-bottomed wigs of European lawyers; and ſtill others wore a ſimple hoop of wood, round which a number of the long white feathers of a gannet hung nodding, and waved in the wind. The women wore a great wide cap, made of very neat mat-work; it was pointed forwards, formed a ridge along the top, and two large lobes behind on each ſide, which we found extremely cooling;

1774. MARCH.

175X 142

[304]

175X 291

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

461 to lie around and gossip, to smoke, to sit and "moon" over the industry, the greatness, and the monuments of his ancestors, the degeneracy and decadence of his race, perhaps, and his own utter and ineradicable worthlessness individually. Natural covetousness and desire for the possession of lucre may tempt him to serve the white man for a time, but he soon tires of his work, which speedily becomes irksome to him. And while he may exert himself a trifle occasionally, in the way of fishing, or in the cultivation of an 8 by 10 patch of sugar cane, taro, and sweet potato, it is only as a matter of necessity, to keep body and soul together, and he infinitely prefers idleness and the enjoyment of his *dolce far niente*.

273 Intoxicating drinks of any description, even kava, so common in the islands to the westward, are unknown to these people, and neither do Mr. Salmon, or the other foreign residents, keep any liquors in their possession. While, therefore, it is true that here, as elsewhere among uncivilized peoples, contact with the European has been attended by their gradual extinction, it can not be said that all the usual factors obtain in this instance, since neither the venereal poison nor intoxicants exist on the island. Consequently, these can not be assigned as causes of the decadence of the Rapa Nuïs. Deportation, forced and voluntary,
161 smallpox, and customs, elsewhere mentioned in this paper, will explain their gradual extinction, in part, at least, while the fact remains that their seemingly inevitable destiny was vastly accelerated when the white man set foot upon their mysterious, mid-ocean island.

● 384 The rite of circumcision, so common in the other islands, is unknown here, nor does their language possess an equivalent word.

162 As may be inferred from the preponderance of the male over the
562 female portion of the community the latter are in demand, and the sup-
595 ply not being equal to it, the women are a source of great solicitude; much
589 consideration is shown them; they are fairly well taken care of, and are treated, generally, with kindness, not to say affection. Polygamy, under the circumstances, does not, of course, exist and celibacy, it may be said, only from necessity, since there are not enough females.

595 While it can not be truthfully claimed that polyandry, in the strict acceptation of the term, obtains among them, they have a custom which very nearly approaches that practice, as will appear presently.

584 At the present day the ceremonies of the church, measurably at least, govern their marriages; nevertheless the ancient custom still prevails, to a considerable extent, and in a few words it is this: When a boy arrives at the age of, say 12 years, his father looks about him for a suitable life-companion, of the opposite sex, for the young hopeful. Having discovered one to his liking the father proceeds to interview the parents of the damsel, who is perhaps of the same age, or more
584 likely younger than her prospective lord, declares his intentions matri-
583 monial and negotiations are then entered into. After a due amount of haggling as to the value of the girl, during which the parents of the

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

of injuries inflicted by her husband in a moment of blind rage over some grievance, fancied or real. In this connection it may be mentioned that subsequently this same woman went to nurse Pakomeo, previously mentioned, who was ill at the time. Upon the recovery, so well pleased were they with each other that she abandoned her cruel spouse, remained with Pakomeo, was living with him as his wife at the time of our visit, and the arrangement seemed mutually satisfactory.

The custom of tattooing has fallen off within the last few years and is now rarely or never practiced. It is only among the adults, more especially among the older people, that good examples may be found. Unless the inhabitants of other islands, where a standard pattern is adhered to, the Rapa Nuiis seem to have affected no uniform fashion nor limited themselves to any particular style. The custom obtained alike among the male and female members of the community. Generally speaking, the ornamentation was as follows: A narrow band around the upper part of the forehead, at the edge of the roots of the hair, with little balls, each joined to the band by a stem, pendant from it, the whole simulating a coronet; a line around the outer free edge, the helix, and lobe of the ear; a line around the edge of the lips; the neck in its entire circumference, either in straight lines, vertical or oblique, or with the lines wavy; three radiating exclamation marks beneath each ear, common among women at the present day; a girdle about the waist, in broad bands, with an attempt at lace work, or fringe, from which rise heavy lines, at the ends of which, toward the axillæ, are fanciful figures resembling faces, with a larger face in the middle of the back; fine lines down the thighs anteriorly; heavy, undulating bands posteriorly, running over the buttocks toward the waist; wavy or straight perpendicular lines, terminating in points, around the legs, and elsewhere.

The material used in tattooing is made of the soot obtained by burning a plant with a leaf similar to our Indian corn, and called by the natives *ti*, moistened with the expressed juice of a berry similar to our pokeberry, and called *poporo*. Pieces of bone, finished like a fine-toothed comb, or fish bones made fast to a short stick, are used to prick the skin by holding in contact with the surface and striking it a brisk blow.

Before the advent of the missionaries the Rapa Nuiis possessed scant wardrobes. They made a coarse cloth woven of the fibers of the inner bark of the *mahuti*, Chinese paper mulberry, or of the *burau*, another fibrous tree, which they wore about the shoulders and loins. This cloth was also used, in the manner of a shield, as a protection in battle against the enemy's spears, which latter was, with the exception of the war club, their principal weapon, the head being made of obsidian, numbers of which may be found on the island. They also made siapu, or tapa, as do the natives of other islands, by beating out the bark and wearing the same as a breechcloth. With the coming of the missionaries civilized clothing was introduced and is now generally worn, comprising coat, shirt and trousers, among the men, and a loose gown of cotton mate-

11: Lavachery A-5 (1934-1935) 1937
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

stone, so easy to fashion is the stone of this island. This argument* can be used against those who put forward the alleged difficulty of carving igneous rock as a reason for attributing them to a race more skilled, more strong, and gifted with better implements than the Polynesians. 174 412

But to return to the first Polynesian colonists. Very probably the fauna and flora of Easter Island were extremely restricted. But following a custom common in all their migrations, they would have taken with them plants, seeds of the most useful vegetables, rats, and chickens. They colonized the island, and their first settlements were at Anakena on the north coast and at Akahanga on the south. They set about conserving rainwater, for Easter Island has no springs. At the same time they learned how to protect the crops against the continual winds. They were familiar with certain crafts which they hold in common with all Polynesians—the making of cloth from mulberry bark (tapa) and the working of wood and stone. The latter craft differs only from that found in the other Polynesian islands in respect of the size of the monuments. The abundance of easily carved stone was the sole predetermining cause of the Pascuans erecting on their island the largest statues found in the islands of Oceania. 174

The technical skill of the former inhabitants is seen also in the manufacture of implements and weapons of obsidian, and of fish-hooks of stone and bone. These last were made with human bone, for man was the only mammal available with bones large enough. The Pascuan writing on wood shows their skill and taste. There have been found a large number of rock paintings and engravings, the former magical, the latter merely trial pieces. 174 172

The Pascuan house, when it is above ground, shows many technical analogies with the Hawaiian house, which, like it, is roofed with tufts of grass set on a framework of boughs. Whenever possible, the Pascuans settled themselves in artificial caves or holes in the ground, which provided a less precarious shelter in war and against thieves. The fowl house was built on the same principles. 174 342 171

The Pascuans were tatooed, and on feast days they painted their bodies with appropriate emblems. 174 304 302

Ten family groups or clans divided up the island between them. The king belonged to the clan of Miru. His place of residence changed, and his role was indeterminate. Many taboos, notably in the matter of food, isolated him from Pascuan life. He did not engage in the wars which often broke out between the clans of the west and north and those of the east (Kotuu against Hotu Itl). He pro- 643 174

* Unfortunately, however, the mystery mongers are not as a rule open to reason. Mystery is their religion.—Translator.

13: Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1917
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

In addition to the finding of the first egg two other ceremonies were mentioned in connection with Orongo and Motu Nui: they were known as "Manu" and "Také" and frequently spoken of together, but to obtain detailed information was a matter of great difficulty. On the subject of Také I have notes of twenty conversations with nine different persons, none of which was really satisfactory; it finally transpired that no first-hand knowledge existed as the rites had been abandoned thirty years before the coming of the missionaries and not as the result of their teaching. All that can be safely said is that those concerned went into retreat on Motu Nui, living, it was stated, in the cave where the hopu awaited the birds; the period was generally given as three months. A vigorous discussion took place on the subject between the oldest man and woman on the island seated on a log in the garden of the old lady; she was positive, in agreement with other authorities, that také was for children, "the boys and girls went in a canoe to the island"; he firmly adhered to the statement that his father went for také after he, the son, was born. The only remaining native who knew anything of the art of hieroglyphic writing stated that také formed the subject of one of the tablets and drew one of its figures, which bears no resemblance to any other known symbol.

Information since acquired of practices elsewhere in the Pacific has suggested the possibility that the retreat was in connection with tattooing and not directly with the bird cult. In some confirmation of this tattooing is stated to have been practised at Mata-Gnarau, the carved rocks of Orongo, and a folk-tale speaks of the earliest exponents of the art as living in a specified cave, not that of the hopu, on Motu Nui. The practice was admittedly on the down grade even before the cataclysm of the sixties.

The details of Manu were more satisfactory. It was known as "Te manu mo te poki," or "the bird for the child," and the child so initiated became a "poki manu,"

14: Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1917
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

532 291 represented any of the numerous feather headdresses of pre-Christian days. There was, however, a hat very commonly worn made of native grass, which has survived and is the almost universal wear at the present time. The general shape of this hat is not dissimilar to that of the images, except that it has a circular brim where the hats of the images have none, but project, as has been said, over the forehead. It may of course point to an adaptation in the stone or to an evolution in the shape of the hat; the point which is interesting is that in living memory such hats had a knob on the top similar to that of the crowns of the images.

532 304 In regard to the design on the back of the images we were more successful; it was definitely recognized as a tattoo design remembered by the older men.

The form of the ears elicited the most interesting information. We have seen that the images represent a race who artificially enlarged the lobe of the ear, a custom which is of course common in many parts of the world. The early voyagers noted that it prevailed among the Easter Islanders of their day. In reply to inquiries on this head it was said that women had the ears enlarged till the coming of Christianity, and two still survived with pierced ears, but such a custom amongst men was unheard of. By persistent search, however, an old leper was found who recalled the fact that the father of his foster-father had had such ears. He had asked as a child for the reason, receiving the illuminating reply that "the old people had their ears like that." Subsequently two other old men were remembered who had had long ears. The custom must therefore have been abandoned by the men towards the end of the eighteenth century. It is noteworthy that this makes the change contemporaneous with the visits of Gonzales, Cook, and La Perouse, and it seems highly probable that this is more than a coincidence. We know that the natives were greatly impressed by the white men, and that they were strongly imitative. In riding round the island we saw the remains of a very large house. "That," we were told, "was where they praised the gods." "What gods?" we naturally asked. "The white men who came in ships" was the unexpected answer. The worship took the form of erecting a crude model of the deck of a European ship both in these special houses and out of doors. Masts were put up. A captain was chosen who strode about and gave orders; the others represented the crew and imitated the various actions incidental to working a ship. The clothes obtained from ships were kept as stage properties for such representations. This custom was in full swing within living memory, and was traced back as far as the grandfathers of the present old men. It will of course be remembered that Cook was similarly taken for a god in the Sandwich Islands.

609 796 796

532 We have seen firstly what tradition has to tell us about the images; and secondly what can be gleaned as to their history from the images themselves. There is still another class of evidence. Attention has been drawn to the fact that Easter Island has produced not only gigantic stone

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

from sixty to five hundred. One of the voyagers goes so far as to say that "all the country was under cultivation." As for the inhabitants, they were, they tell us, of all shades of colour, yellow, white, and brown, and wore clothes made of a "field product," evidently tapa. They were "painted," which apparently signifies tattooed, and it was the habit to distend the lobes of their ears so that they hung to the shoulders, and large discs were worn in them. "When these Indians," wrote Roggeveen, "go about any job which might set their ear-plugs wagging, and bid fair to do them any hurt, they take them out and hitch the rim of the lobe up over the top of the ear, which gives them a quaint and laughable appearance."[1]

The natives were extraordinarily thievish, stealing the caps from the seamen's heads, while one actually climbed into the port-hole of the cabin and took the cloth off the table. These habits gave rise to an unfortunate incident, as when the visitors came on shore, a scuffle took place over the sanctity of property, and the natives began throwing stones, on which a petty official gave the order to fire, ten or twelve natives being killed. The occurrence, however, was duly explained, and did not terminate amicable relations. We learn that at this time the great statues, of which this is of course the first report, were then, as has already been noted, standing and in place. The Dutchmen describe them as "remarkable, tall, stone figures, a good 30 feet in height," and notice that they have crowns on their heads; a clear space was, they said, reserved round them by laying stones. They have no doubt that the figures are objects of worship; the natives "kindle fires in front of them, and thereafter squatting on their heels with heads bowed down, they bring the palms of their hands together and alternately raise and lower them." Another observer adds, in connection with this worship, that they "prostrated themselves towards the rising sun." A great step would have been gained towards the solution of the problem if we could feel assured that these last remarks were justified and were not merely the result of imperfect observation.[2]

[1] Precisely the same habit obtains to-day among the Akikuyu in East Africa.

[2] For Roggeveen's description of the Island see *Voyage of Gonsalez*, Hakluyt Society, Series II., vol. xiii., pp. 3 to 26.
A statement of the evidence re Davis Island is given in the introduction to the same volume.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

idols,[1] from which it may be gathered that the great majority were still erect. The figures were, they tell us, all set up on small stones, and burying-places were in front. It is interesting, in view of what we know of the prohibition of smoke near the ahu,[2] to find one of the Spanish writing: "They could not bear us to smoke cigars; they begged our sailors to extinguish them, and they did so. I asked one of them the reason, and he made signs that the smoke went upwards; but I do not know what this meant."[3] Cook's people observed that the natives disliked these burying-places being walked over, but whereas Roggeveen was convinced, whether rightly or wrongly, that the cult of the statues was what we should call "a going concern," Cook, fifty years later, is equally certain that it is a thing of the past; some of the figures are still standing, but some are fallen down, and the inhabitants "do not even trouble to repair the foundations of those which are going to decay." "The giant statues," he says, "are not in my opinion looked upon as idols by the present inhabitants, whatever they may have been in the days of the Dutch." Forster also remarks that "they are so disproportionate to the strength of the nation, it is most reasonable to look upon them as the remains of better times." La Pérouse does not agree with this last sentiment; he admits that at present the monuments are not respected, but he sees no reason why they should not still be made even under existing conditions; he thinks that a hundred people would be sufficient to put one of the statues in place. The objection he sees is that the people have no chief great enough to secure such a memorial. It is unfortunate that the mountain of Rano Raraku is so far removed from both the north and west anchorages, that none of the voyagers discovered it, although Cook's men were very near that from which the crowns were obtained.

In the nineteenth century we have a few accounts from passing voyagers. Lisiansky, in 1804, found no people with long ears,[4] but in 1825 Beechey in H.M.S. *Blossom* says that there were still a few to be seen. With regard to the statues, the process of

[1] MS. copy in the British Museum of a letter sent by one of the officers of the Spanish ship to a Canon or a Prebendary in Buenos Aires. MSS. 17607 (18). Our attention was drawn to this document by Dr. Corney.

[2] See above, p. 171.

[3] *Voyage of Gonzales*, p. 126.

[4] *Voyage Round the World in the Ship "Neva,"* Lisiansky, Lond. 1814, p. 58.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

made of grass; the brim projected all the way round as with a European hat, but it had the same form of knot on the top as that of the statues.

Tattooing was a universal practice, and the exactness of the designs excited the admiration of the early voyagers, who wondered how savages managed to achieve such regularity and

1 and 2 (on face), Stone adzes.

3 (on chest), Fish-hooks.

4 (on chest), Spear-heads or "mataa."

5 (on waist), "Paré-pu."

6 (on arms), Reported as decorative only.

FIG. 88.—DESIGNS USED IN TATTOOING, DRAWN BY NATIVES.

accuracy. The drawings made for us from the descriptions of the old people show the men covered, not only with geometrical designs, but with pictures of every-day objects, such as chisels and fish-hooks; even houses, boats, and chickens were represented in this way according to taste. The most striking objects were drawings of heads, one on each side of the body, known as

15:Routledge E-5 (1914–1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2
Tuamotu OX9

E
142
304

FIG. 88.

AN OLD WOMAN OF EASTER ISLAND WITH DILATED EAR-LOBE.

T
142

FIG. 89.

MAHANGA.
A native of the Paumotu

[facing p. 220]

15t Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

"paré-pu," which the old mariners describe as "fearsome monstrosities" [1] (fig. 88). Various old persons said that they remembered seeing men with a pattern on the back similar to the rings and girdle of the images. It seems, however, doubtful whether the image design merely represented tattoo, in view of the fact that it was raised, not incised, and in any case this would only put the search for its prototype a stage further back. The fact, however, remains that those particular marks were still being perpetuated, and form a link connecting the present with the past. Beechey, in 1825, tells us the women were so tattooed as to look as if they wore breeches. In addition to this kind of decoration, the islanders adorned themselves with various colours: white and red were obtained from mineral products found in certain places; yellow from a plant known as "pua," [2] and black from ashes of sugar-cane. They had a distinct feeling for art. Some of the paintings found in caves and houses are obviously recent, and it is a frequent answer to questions as to the why and wherefore of things, that they were to make some object "look nice."

It will be remembered that not only have the images long ears, but that all the early voyagers speak of them as general among the inhabitants. It was therefore somewhat surprising to find that no such thing was known as a man whose ears had been perforated, though with the women the custom went on till the introduction of Christianity, and two or three females with the lobe dilated in this manner still survived (fig. 90). At last one old leper recalled that the father of his foster-father had long ears, and on asking as a child for the reason, he had received the illuminating reply that "the old people had them like that." He also mentioned one or two others with similar ears, and this was subsequently confirmed by other authorities. It will be seen that the custom, as far as men were concerned, of dilating the lobe of the ear, must have been abandoned at the end of the eighteenth century, or just about the time of the visits of the Spanish, English, and French Expeditions. That this was cause and effect, and that they imitated the appearance of the foreign sailors, seems more than a guess; it will appear from other

[1] *Voyage of Gonzalez*, p. 90.
[2] One of the Scitamineæ—further determination awaits the blooming of plants brought back to Kew.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

sources how great was the impression which was made by the foreigners.

Social Life.—Roggeveen's description of the people as being of all shades of colour is still accurate. They themselves are very conscious of the variations, and when we were collecting genealogies, they were quite ready to give the colour of even remote relations: "Great-aunt Susan," it would be unhesitatingly stated, was "white," and "Great-aunt Jemima black." The last real ariki, or chief, was said to be quite white. "White like me?" I innocently asked. "You!" they said, "you are red"; the colour in European cheeks, as opposed to the sallow white to which they are accustomed, is to the native our most distinguishing mark. It is obvious that we are dealing with a mixed race, but this only takes us part of the way, as the mixture may have taken place either before or after they reached the island.

They were divided into ten groups, or clans ("máta"), which were associated with different parts of the island, though the boundaries blend and overlap; members of one division settled not infrequently among those of another. Each person still knows his own clan.

In remembered times there were no group restrictions on marriage, which took place indiscriminately between members of the same or of different clans. The only prohibition had reference to consanguinity, and forbade all union nearer than the eighth degree or third cousins. These ten clans were again grouped, more especially in legend or speaking of the remote past, into two major divisions known as Kotuu (or Otuu), and Hotu Iti, which correspond roughly with the western and eastern parts of the island. These divisions were also known respectively as Mata-nui, or greater clans, and Mata-iti, or lesser clans. The lower portions of the island were the most densely populated parts, especially those on the coast, and the settlements on the higher ground appear to have been few (fig. 91).

In Kotuu, the Marama and Háumoana inhabited side by side the land running from sea to sea between the high central ground and the western volcano Rano Kao. They had a small neighbour, the Ngatimo, to the south, and jointly with the Miru spread over Rano Kao and formed settlements by the margin of the crater lake. The Miru lived on the high, narrow strip

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

to several in turn, finally returning to its own destination. We collected a certain number of genealogical trees, the various dramatis personæ being for this purpose represented by matches or buttons. It was not a very popular line of research, the cry being apt to be raised, "Now let's talk of something interesting"; but some two hundred names were in this way placed in their family groups, with details of clan, place of residence and colour, and some knowledge obtained with regard to many more. It is not of course enough ground on which to found any theory, but it was very useful in checking information gathered in other ways. Only in one case was it possible to get back beyond the great-grandfather of our informant, but the knowledge of family connections was often greater than would be found among Europeans. The number of childless marriages was striking.

The early story of Viriamo (fig. 83), the oldest woman living in our day, gives a picture of this primitive state of things. She belonged to the clan of Ureohei, and her family had lived for some generations, as far back as could be remembered, on the edge of the eastern volcano, not far from Raraku. The great-grandfather, who was dark, had as his only wife a white woman of the Hamea. Their son was white, and had two wives, one of the Tupahotu and one of the Ngaure. By the first, although she also was white, he had a dark son who married a white wife of his own clan, Ureohei, but of a different group. Viriamo was the second of their eight children, all of whom were white save herself and her eldest brother. Four of the girls died young in the epidemic of smallpox in 1864. Viriamo and two of her sisters were initiated as children into the bird rite.[1] When older she was tattooed with rings round her forehead and with the dark-blue breeches. Somewhat later, but still as a young woman, she went over to Anakena and had her ears pierced, but she never had the lobe extended, preferring to let it remain small. When asked about her marriage, she bridled as coyly as a young girl. Her first union was a matter of arrangement, the husband, who was also of the Ureohei, giving her father much food, and, if she had refused to accept the situation, she would, she said, have been beaten. There was no ceremony of any kind, no new clothes nor feasting; her father simply took her to her new home and handed her over. The house was near the two statues with

[1] See below, pp. 266–68.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

off. So he went to Ngaara, who told him to bring ten coconuts, which he broke and put in pieces of the sacred tree, "ngau-ngau"; the spell blasted the offender, who promptly died. Ngaara himself attended the inauguration of any house of importance. The wooden lizards were put formally on each side of the entrance to the porch, and the Ariki and an ivi-atua, who "went with him like a tatane," were the first to eat in the new dwelling: only the houses with stone foundations were thus honoured. The Ariki was visited one month in the year by "all people," who brought him the plant known as pua on the end of sticks, put the pua into his house, and retired backwards.

He also held receptions on other occasions, seated on the broken-off head of an old image, which was pointed out on a grassy declivity among the hills behind Anakena; these were special occasions for criticising the tattoo. Those who were well tattooed were sent to stand on one hill slope, whilst those who were badly done were sent to another; the Ariki and men behind him laughed contemptuously at the latter (which, as the process was permanent and could not be altered, seems slightly unkind.) These receptions were also attended by men who had made boats, and by twins, to whom the Ariki gave a "royal name." Such children were not, as in so many countries, considered unlucky, but it was necessary that at birth they should live in a house apart, otherwise they would not survive. This superstition still exists. Shortly before our arrival a woman in the village had given birth to twins, for whom a little grass house was put up; another woman went in and brought them out to the mother to nurse.

The Script

Closely connected with the subject of the Miru clan is that of the method of writing. While we can only catch glimpses of the image cult through the mists of antiquity, the tablets, known as "kohau-rongo-rongo,"[1] were an integral part of life on the island within the memory of men not much past middle age (fig. 98). The highest authority on them was the ariki Ngaara. It was tantalising to feel how near we were to their translation and yet how far. Te Haha had begun to learn to write, but found that his hand shook too much, besides, as he explained, Ngaara

[1] Sometimes called koho-rongo-rongo.